

Wales Invasive Non-native Species Group Newsletter

ISSUE 4
JULY 2020

Invasive Non-native Species (INNS) are plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms which have been introduced to parts of the world where they would not be naturally found. They have the ability to spread causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health and the way we live. INNS are the second greatest threat after habitat loss and fragmentation. INNS have been estimated to cost the UK economy at least £1.8 billion annually, they mainly affect farming and horticultural sectors but can affect transport, construction, recreation, aquaculture and utilities.

The **Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) Invasive Non-native Species Group** provides a source of expertise on INNS in Wales. The group was established in 2008 and includes a wide range of partners from Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, the environmental third sector and other public and private sector organisations. The Group last met on 11 March 2020.

For more info visit the [WBP website](#).

HOT TOPIC

The Wales Resilient Ecological Network (WaREN) Project



Common Invasive Non-Native Species in Wales. Japanese Knotweed (left) and Himalayan Balsam. Credit: GBINNS.

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) remain one of the highest threats to global biodiversity, impacting upon public health and wellbeing as well as our general ecology. In 2010, the Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI) estimated the cost of INNS to be £1.7 billion to the British economy, with £125 million of this being directly attributed to Wales.

Funded by the Welsh Government's Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRaW) grant the project is nearing the end of its initial development phase. The WaREN project seeks to unify Wales in its approach with regards to dealing with INNS.

In the next phase of the project, WaREN hopes to advise on potential future INNS (Horizon reporting) issues. The project plans to launch a one stop shop internet experience with a user-friendly public reporting area which will help create a faster response to the enablement of dealing with new occurrences of INNS. The one stop shop will be a

go-to area for advice on training and funding resources and a place to meet up with likeminded action groups and stakeholders.

A key area of training and Local Action Group (LAG) development will focus upon Biosecurity which will be heavily promoted within the WaREN umbrella. To date, WaREN Project Officers have listed priority INNS, identified stakeholders and interviewed LAGs as to their needs, requirements and methodology. A proposal has also been put forward for the next stage of WaREN, where the project will be further developed and implementation will begin.

If you are part of a LAG, working on INNS or have an interest in becoming involved contact Ian Doyle, WaREN's Project Officer at Ian.Doyle@northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk and help Wales to combat the threat of invasive non-native species and improve the biodiversity of our nation for future generations to enjoy.

British Irish Council

BIC INNS officials have been meeting bi-annually since 2013 to explore and agree areas of cooperation on INNS. The fourth BIC INNS workshop was held in Cardiff on 20/21 January 2020 hosted jointly by the BIC Secretariat and Welsh Government.



The workshop had four main themes: (i) Pathways, (ii) Communications (iii) Contingency Planning and Rapid Response (iv) International INNS policy. The workshop was highly successful and feedback has been very positive.

There are 8 actions that were agreed to take forward from the workshop to be put before Ministers at the planned BIC Environment meeting in May in Jersey. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak it has been postponed until later in the year.

Legislation & policy

Legislation

An updated FAQ on the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation and The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 will be published soon on the GBNNSS website. The Enforcement and Permitting Order came into force on 1 December 2019.

Consultation

The consultation: *Invasive alien species: management measures for widely spread species in England and Wales* has closed. Defra and the Welsh Government have published their joint response here: <https://gov.wales/management-measures-widely-spread-invasive-alien-species-ias-england-and-wales>.

LATEST NEWS

Chinese Mitten Crab

There has been a confirmed sighting of a Chinese mitten crab in the Severn Estuary. Chinese mitten crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*) is an Invasive Alien Species (IAS), which has the potential to significantly impact the resilience of marine and freshwater ecosystems in Wales. Mitten crabs originate from eastern Asia and spend most of their lives in freshwater and can migrate far inland returning to the sea to breed.



They can disrupt ecosystems, predate and outcompete other species, damage fishing gear, burrow into banks causing erosion and increase sediment load. They have damaged flood risk assets in other countries.



Chinese Mitten Crab. Credit: FERA

While there was an unconfirmed sighting in the Severn in 2015 near Bristol and the shell of a mitten crab washed ashore in Swansea Bay in 2016,

this is the first confirmed report of it in the Severn. This new record of an adult mitten crab confirms that they are likely to have established in the Severn. The only other population of mitten crabs in Wales is located on the River Dee.



Japanese knotweed. Credit: Advanced Invasives

Japanese Knotweed

The WBP INNS Group's last meeting on 11th March included talks from Advanced Invasives and Swansea University on their extensive Japanese Knotweed research. This resulted in an update of the Japanese knotweed public information leaflet and Japanese knotweed information for community groups leaflet which will be published mid-July on the WG webpages. (<https://gov.wales/japanese-knotweed-advice-community-and-voluntary-groups>)

NRW's Biosecurity Planning for Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation

The project is a three year European and Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) funded project looking at biosecurity planning for Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (PLAS SAC).

The main aim is to work with local stakeholders to develop a marine biosecurity plan that minimises the risk of introduction and spread of marine invasive non-native species within PLAS SAC. This involves evidence gathering, developing pathway action plans and species action plans as well as monitoring, management and awareness raising actions.

Key Messaging document

An updated INNS key messaging document (<https://biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/699/en-GB>) has been completed to:

- help provide consistent and straightforward messaging
- help to raise awareness of the impacts of INNS in Wales
- to promote good biosecurity practises
- to enable the public to assist in recording sightings of INNS
- to encourage actions to be taken to control and avoid the spread of INNS where appropriate

TRAINING & EVENTS

Events

Invasive Species Week 2020

[Invasive Species Week](#) (18th-22nd May 2020) was due to include a Ministerial visit to North Wales Wildlife Trust which unfortunately had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. We hope to be able to hold a smaller initiative in the Autumn, but this is currently under review. Contact WBP to be added to the mailing list for updates.

Training

Suggestions for safe lockdown activities are on the GB Invasive Non-native Species website:

<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm>

Free online training:

<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=123>

CONTACT US



www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Invasive-Non-Native-Species-Group



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